

CLAIMS

Claims 1-73 (currently cancelled)

Claim 74 (new): A method comprising:

forming an annular reinforcing structure integral with a female end portion of a segment of polymeric material configured as a conduit.

Claim 75 (new): The method as defined in claim 74 wherein the annular reinforcing structure is formed by:

subjecting the polymeric material proximate the distal end of the female end portion to conditions sufficient to render the material plastic; and

turning the material proximate the distal end axially backward.

Claim 76 (new): The method as defined in claim 75 wherein the material proximate the distal end is turned axially backward and radially inward.

Claim 77 (new): The method as defined in claim 75 wherein the material proximate the distal end is turned axially backward and radially outward.

Claim 78 (new): The method as defined in claim 75 wherein the integral annular reinforcing structure has a circular cross-section.

Claim 79 (new): The method as defined in claim 75 wherein the integral annular reinforcing structure has a semi-circular cross-section.

Claim 80 (new): The method as defined in claim 75 wherein the integral annular reinforcing structure has a U-shaped cross-section.

Claim 81 (new): The method as defined in claim 75 wherein the integral annular reinforcing structure has an S-shaped cross-section.

Claim 82 (new): The method as defined in claim 74 wherein the annular reinforcing structure is formed by:

subjecting the polymeric material within a segment of the female end portion to conditions sufficient to render the material plastic; and

forming an annular bead from the polymeric material within the segment.

Claim 83 (new): The method as defined in claim 82 wherein the annular bead is located at the distal end of the female end portion.

Claim 84 (new): The method as defined in claim 74 wherein the integral reinforcing structure is formed by:

adding an annular bead of material to the female end portion.

Claim 85 (new): The method as defined in claim 84 wherein the annular bead of material is added to the distal end of the female end portion.

Claim 86 (new): The method as defined in claim 84 wherein the annular bead is formed of the same material used to make the female end portion.

Claim 87 (new): The method as defined in claim 74 further comprising forming an outwardly flared portion within the female end portion of the pipe section.

Claim 88 (new): The method as defined in claim 87 wherein the outwardly flared portion terminates at the distal end of the female end segment.

Claim 89 (new): The method as defined in claim 74 wherein the integral annular reinforcing structure is located slightly inward from a distal end of the female end portion.